



SOUTHERN GOVERNORS' ASSOCIATION

August 19, 2002

The Honorable John Kerry
U.S. Senate
304 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Kerry:

We are deeply concerned that small businesses in states experiencing drought are being devastated by drought conditions that are expected to continue through the end of the summer. We urge you to support legislation that would allow small businesses to protect themselves against the detrimental effects of drought.

Much like other natural disasters, the effects of drought on local economies can be crippling. Farmers and farm-related businesses can turn in times of drought to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. However, non-farm small businesses have nowhere to go, not even the Small Business Administration (SBA), because their disaster loans are not made available for damage due to drought.

To remedy this omission, Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass.) introduced the Small Business Drought Relief Act (S. 2734) on July 16, 2002, to make SBA disaster loans available to those small businesses debilitated by prolonged drought conditions. This bill was passed by the Senate Small Business Committee just eight days later. Also, the companion legislation (H.R. 5197) was introduced by Rep. Jim DeMint (R-S.C.) on July 24, 2002. Both bills are gaining bipartisan support, and we hope you will cosponsor this important legislation and push for its rapid enactment in the 107th Congress.

As 11 southern states are presently experiencing moderate to exceptional drought conditions this summer, we cannot afford to wait to act. We urge you to cosponsor the Small Business Drought Relief Act and push for its consideration as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Gov. Don Siegelman of Alabama

Gov. Mike Huckabee of Arkansas

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Governor of Louisiana

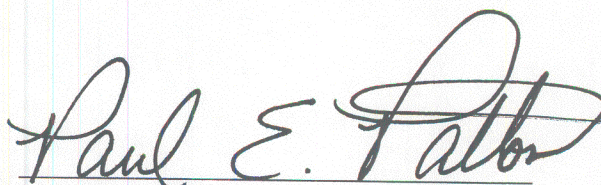
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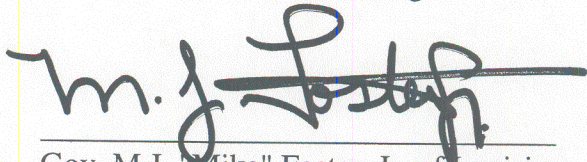
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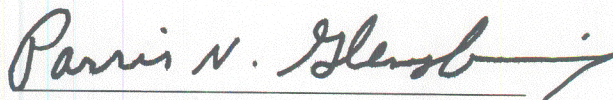
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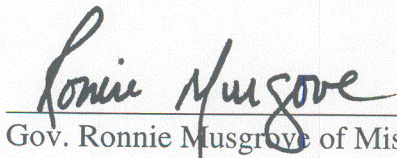
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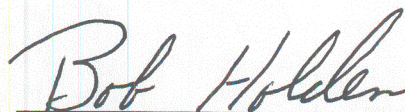
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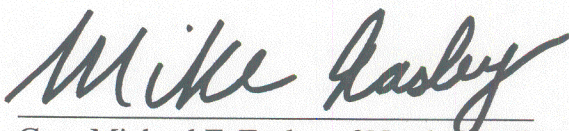
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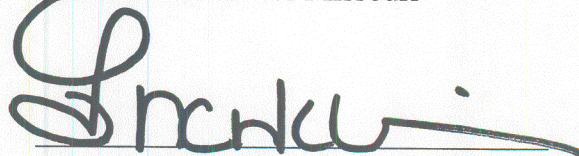
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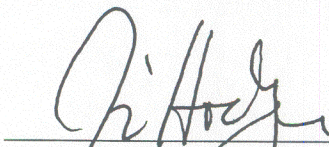
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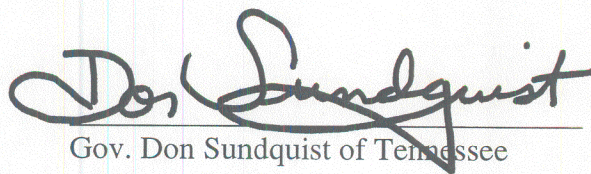
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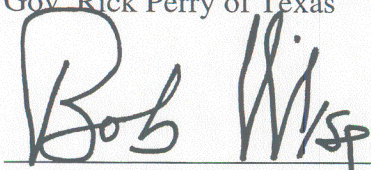
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Gov. Rick Perry of Texas



Gov. Mark Warner of Virginia



Gov. Bob Wise of West Virginia